

A STRANGE OLD LADY HAS MOVED INTO MY HOUSE

A very weird thing has happened. A strange old lady has moved into my house. I have no idea who she is, where she came from or how she got in. I certainly didn't invite her. All I know is that one day she wasn't there and the next day she was.

She's very clever. She manages to keep out of sight for the most part, but whenever I pass a mirror, I catch a glimpse of her there; completely obliterating my gorgeous face and body.

It's very disconcerting. I've tried screaming at her to leave, but she just screams back, grimacing horrible. She's really frightening.

If she's going to hang around, the least she could do is offer to pay rent. But no—every once in a while I do find a couple of dollar bills on the kitchen counter or some loose change on my bureau or on the floor, but certainly not enough. In fact, though I don't like to jump to conclusions, I think she steals from me quite regularly; I go to the ATM and withdraw a hundred dollars and a few days later, it's gone.

I certainly don't go through it that fast, so I can only conclude that the old lady pilfers it. You'd think she'd spend some of it on wrinkle cream—goodness knows she needs it.

And money isn't the only thing she's taking. Food seems to disappear at an alarming rate. Especially the good stuff, ice cream, cookies, and candy—I just can't seem to keep them in the house—she really has a sweet tooth. She should watch it; she's putting on the pounds. I think she realizes that and to make herself feel better, I know she's tampering with my scale so I'll think I'm gaining weight, too.

For an old lady, she's quite childish. She also gets into my clothes. They're getting tighter every day.

Another thing: I wish she'd stop messing with my files and papers on my desk. I can't find a thing anymore. This is particularly hard to deal with because I'm extremely neat and organized but she manages to jumble everything so nothing is where it is supposed to be. Furthermore, when I program the VCR to tape something, she fiddles with it after I leave the room so it records the wrong channel or shuts off completely.

She finds innumerable, imaginative ways to irritate me. She gets to my newspapers, magazines and mail before me and blurs all the fine print; and she'd one something sinister with the volume control on my TV, radio and phone. Now all I hear are mumbles and whispers. She's also made my stairs steeper, my vacuum cleaner heavier and all my knobs and faucets hard to turn and my bed higher and a real challenge to climb into or out of.

Furthermore, she gets to my groceries as soon as I shelve them and applies super glue to the tops of every jar and bottle so they're just about impossible to open. Is this any way to repay hospitality?

As if all this isn't bad enough, she is no longer confining her malevolence to the house. She's now found a way to sneak into my car with me and follow me wherever I go. I see her reflection in store windows as I pass and

she's taken all the fun out of clothes shopping because her penchant for monopolizing mirrors has extended to dressing rooms.

When I try something on, she dons an identical outfit—which looks ridiculous on her. Then she stands directly in front of me so I can't see how great it looks on me.

I thought she couldn't get any meaner than that, but yesterday she proved me wrong. She had the nerve to come with me when I went to have some passport pictures taken and she stepped in front of the camera just as the shutter clicked. Disaster! I have never seen such a terrible picture. How can I go abroad now? No customs official is ever going to believe that that crone scowling from the passport is me.

She's walking on very thin ice, if she keeps this up; I swear I'll put her in a home. On second thought, I shouldn't be too hasty. First, I think I'll check with the IRS and see if I can claim her as a dependent.

(Internet resource, author unknown – I would love to give proper credit to whoever wrote this clever story, so if you know the author, please let me know)

EMBRACING AGING WITH GRACE

I laugh and shake my head in agreement as I read the story above for I could certainly relate to the strange old lady that had moved into my home. The truth of reality comes to light and I think about the facts of life that I now have to face. I have to adopt a new lifestyle as the years are added to my life. I have to make changes to my diet, my activities, and my social life. I have to develop a whole new way of living as certain lifestyle changes are forced upon me. It is a difficult path to walk and to not to become frustrated or angry is indeed hard. Most people hate changes, me included, and getting older is certainly what I call a *WHOPPER* life change.

Then Jesus says, *Katie, let's sit down and have a little talk.* We do and I have a clearer understanding of where the life of a Christian is going as we talk about the pursuit of happiness—doing our all to the glory of God and knowing our work is not over, no matter the age, for there are people who need YOU today. You can still make a difference in someone's life as you introduce them to Jesus Christ and help set their feet on the pathway to heaven.

We are all important vessels to be used of the Father for the building of the Kingdom of God, and we see that age is an on-going, yet, necessary ingredient factored into God's plan. Age is a *moving on* process as our daily assignments may change to fit our ability, but they never go away. I love to hear the stories that even upon their death bed a Christian may be a part of God's plan as a sinner turns to Jesus and all heaven rejoices. No, our work is never done until that last breath is drawn; we take His hand, and depart from this earthly body.

Yes, I have to admit that the youth are called to do "*works*" that their youthful, strong and energetic bodies can handle, that I at seventy five cannot now do, but I can remember my youthful days in serving the Lord and *precious memories* will always be mine. I love to teach the *little ones* about Jesus, about God, about the Holy

Spirit and teach them to pray. These *little ones* are our future youth workers, and our youth become our future Pastors, Evangelists, Warriors, Intercessors, that fill and support every God ordained position in the Body of Christ.

Christians are blessed people in that they serve an all- powerful, all-knowing and all-caring God, who is mindful of His children at all, times. His provisions do not run out, His protection is not withdrawn, His love is never-ending; it will cover us throughout eternity. We are a privileged (favored) people. May we purpose in our hearts to be obedient and love Him as He has loved us. May we never weary in well doing—no matter our age.

God is truly *omnipotent* (all-powerful), *omniscient* (all-knowing) and *omnipresent* (present everywhere). The best description of God is the name that He gave Himself to the early Israelites, *Yahweh*. *Yahweh* is usually translated “Jehovah” or “LORD” and literally means “He who causes (everything else) to be.” What an awesome God we serve and He delights that we come into partnership with Him.

My brothers and sisters, as born again believers, we individually and corporately have work to do in the Kingdom of God. Age will never distract from that truth; our assignments are suited to our gifts, our talents, as God sees fit. He has even sent the Holy Spirit to help us, if needed, to complete the task. From a young child to a senior citizen, when God places a calling upon our lives, you and only you are called to fulfill it—to do His bidding. When one job is completed, He has another one ready for you to do. God is always trying to get you turned around “to seek first His kingdom.” The words *wrong way* is not in his vocabulary. No matter your age, there is always something for you to do in the Kingdom of God until the day He takes you home to be with Him.

Learn to wake up each morning determined to incorporate into your day 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 which says, *Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thank; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*